Changes in the Frederick County Fire & Rescue Services

by Clarence “Chip” Jewell

The year 2013 has been a year of dramatic change for the Frederick County fire and rescue service. Chief Tom Owens, Director of the Division of Fire & Rescue Services announced his retirement effective June 1, 2013. This retirement came at a time of consolidation of the fire and rescue services as the “Delegation of Authority” ordinance passed by the Board of County Commissioners was effective on July 1, 2013.

The “Delegation of Authority” ordinance provides for the position of “Director” of fire and rescue services for Frederick County. The ordinance expands that authority from a division director responsible just for county employees to a county wide director of all fire and rescue services. The director position holds the rank of “Chief.”

Chief Denise Pouget was appointed as Director of Fire Rescue Services effective July 22, 2013. Chief Pouget has an extensive fire service background beginning as a volunteer in Montgomery to ultimately attaining the rank of Assistant Chief of Health and Safety in the Montgomery County Department of Fire and Rescue Services. Prior to her appointment, she was an Assistant Chief of the Alexandria, VA Fire Department. Chief Pouget has a bachelor’s degree from American Public University in fire science and a master’s degree in emergency disaster management.

In addition to Chief Pouget, two Deputy Chief’s were appointed to complete the new management team. Deputy Chief M. Allan Keyser, the former volunteer chief of the Carroll Manor Volunteer Fire Company and retired captain with the Montgomery County Department of Fire Rescue Services will assume the new position of Deputy Chief of Operations. Deputy Chief Mike Grierson, also recently retired with over 30 years of service in Montgomery County, will serve as Deputy Chief of Finance and Logistics. John North, will also serve in a limited duration position of fire planner.

The Oldest Volunteer Fire Company in Queen Anne’s County

by Dan Tabler, Historian & PP

The Goodwill Fire Company, Inc. the oldest volunteer fire company in Queen Anne’s County, is preparing to observe its 125th year of service to the county seat, Centreville, in 2014. The company was organized on Oct. 28, 1889, with 37 active members and 24 honorary members. The first president was A. Randolph Weedon and the first fire chief was Frank Gemmell.

A 100-year-history of the fire company was compiled in 1989 and a few of the 88-page booklets are still available. Excerpts from the early hand-written minutes are included in the history book.

The fire company also has the distinction of having the first motorized fire apparatus on the Eastern Shore. It was built in 1916 by a committee composed of Milton Slemer, Col. Hopper Gibson, Madison Bordley, Chesapeake A. Ringgold, and Daniel G. Connolly, who was chief. It served until 1937 when a new pumper was purchased.

As with all rural fire companies, fund-raisers are a necessity. While Goodwill has had various kinds over the years, two traditional chicken barbeques now are produced in the spring and fall to aid in the financial situation.

One of the most active committee chairs is Butch Britton, who heads up the Fire Prevention group. He had made sure that students in local schools receive fire safety-related material several times a year. 
Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department Honors Arizona Firefighters

by Shirley Copado

Members of the Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department displayed 19 American flags bracketed by shovels and hard hats on their property fronting Route 235. The flags are meant to honor the elite group of firefighters who died in July combating blazes that scorched large portions of Arizona, including many homes and forcing many to flee the community.

Reports show that the members of the Prescott Fire Department’s Granite Mountain Hotshots were killed when the inferno that engulfed 8,400 acres of land spread to Yarnell Hill near Phoenix.

The blaze became so intense that the shelters the firefighting elites brought with them were not enough to protect them.

Bill Mattingly, president of the Hollywood Fire Department, said the memorial was the least they could do to remember their fallen brethren. “We did this just to honor them,” Mattingly said.
The 2013 Installation at the MSFA Convention

The Installation, June 18, 2013. L to R Past President John Denver; President Jacqueline M. Olson; 1st VP, David Keller, Iii; 2nd VP, Johnie F. Roth, Jr. Photo Credit: Jim Brown

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The late J. Millard Tawes was a moving force in the Crisfield Volunteer Fire Department and Somerset County politics, being elected to the Clerk of the Court of Somerset County in 1934. While involved in local politics, he moved forward within the chairs of MSFA and was elected President of the Maryland State Firemen’s Association in 1936. His elevation in the MSFA provided statewide exposure to help him successfully run for the office of Comptroller of the State of Maryland. Though he unsuccessfully ran for governor in 1946, he eventually returned as State Comptroller and was elected Governor of the State of Maryland in 1958. As governor, he continued his close association with MSFA by providing the Governor’s Yacht for outings for the MSFA leadership. A picture of MSFA members, including Fire Marshall James C. “Robbie” Robertson and letter from Governor Tawes are on display at the Frederick County Fire & Rescue Museum in Emmitsburg. Governor Tawes was also a close friend of MSFA President Phil Beard (1958, Walkersville) and pictures of Governor Tawes attending the annual banquet of the Frederick County Volunteer Firemen’s Association in Walkersville are also on display.

There is story that when Governor Tawes first met in Annapolis with political leaders, he was questioned if he could handle the politics of the state legislature. Supposedly, his was reply was “The Democrats and Republicans have nothing on the firemen.” This statement was an alleged reference to the “firehouse politics” he faced in his years in the fire service. Politics at many levels has been as much a part of the fire service as hooks and ladders.

Though the complexion and demographics of the fire service has changed, the politics has not. Every year, members of the MSFA Legislative Committee work hundreds hours on behalf of every member company. Their commitment in Annapolis during the legislative session is a monumental task. Their efforts can be made much easier with more grassroots involvement at the local level. No matter how much they push in Annapolis, local contact to legislators is the best means of getting support for our cause.

There have been considerable discussion to attempt again to form a volunteer fire service Political Action Committee (PAC). The general public connotation of PAC’s is not always positive, especially after the spending frenzy of the last presidential election. To foster targeted support with the vast demographic disparity of our member companies could lead to even more contention. On the other hand, a well oiled, coordinated political force could gain the fruits of efforts. The need for increased political involvement of our members is of the utmost importance. How we are involved is the question.

The most successful political action is the one-on-one, person to politician contact. We need to cultivate the relationships with our commissioners, councilmen, delegates, state senators and even members of Congress. Most importantly, we must be registered and turnout the vote. Years ago, I was involved in fire service

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William E. Barnard retires as MD’s State Fire Marshal after 12 years of service

by Ron Watkins
MSFA Public Relations Committee

On July 27, 2013, more than 200 members of the Maryland and national fire service gathered at the Elks Lodge in Edgewater to honor William E. Barnard with a luncheon as he retired from the position of Maryland State Fire Marshal, which he has held for the past 12 years. They were all there to pay their respects to the man who has made possible some significant changes in the fire laws of our State, and in doing so, has improved the level of safety not only for the citizens, but also for the firefighters of Maryland.

Bill was appointed to the State Fire Marshal position on July 11, 2001, succeeding Rocco Gabrielle. There have only been three State Fire Marshals in Maryland – James “Robby” Robertson, Rocco Gabrielle, and Bill Barnard. Throughout his two terms, Bill has made several improvements in the operations of the Fire Marshal’s Office.

He implemented the Fire Safety Inspector job classification, allowing the sworn Deputy SFMs to concentrate on fire/explosive investigations and law enforcement functions; introduced several technology improvements, obtaining and updating computers and electronic equipment to provide more local and wide area networks and update the equipment and vehicles used by the Bomb Squad; and improved promotional opportunities for the Deputy State Fire Marshals.

Bill also worked to promote and improve partnerships with the local jurisdictions, fire service organizations, law enforcement agencies, and state and national organizations.

Some of the major accomplishments of the State Fire Marshal’s office during his tenure are requiring only fire safety compliant cigarettes to be sold in Maryland, working with the Maryland State Firemen’s Association and the Maryland Fire Chiefs Association to legislate home sprinkler systems to be installed in new one and two family homes, and then working within the past year to prohibit local jurisdictions from weakening these provisions, and most recently, rewriting the State’s 38 year old smoke alarm law to require that battery operated smoke alarms have sealed long life batteries that cannot be removed, along with a “hush” feature, effective July 1, 2013. The result of these efforts has been a continual drop in the number of fire related deaths in our State.

Retiring State Fire Marshal William Barnard receives a speaking trumpet award from Maryland State Firemen’s Association representatives. (l to r) MSFA Miss Fire Prevention Danni Crane, MSFA President Jacqueline Olson, Barnard, and MSFA 2nd Vice President Johnie Roth Jr.

Photo: Watkins
They were almost lost to the junk pile as their former home was about to undergo extensive renovation.....a horrible thought for all who had worked hard to see the original Firefighters Room created along with numerous historical displays established there over 4 decades ago!

**Volunteer Trumpet**

*by Wayne Powell*

After 40 years of being a prominent feature within the “Volunteer Firefighters Room” at the Center of Adult Education at the University of Maryland’s College Park campus, three beautiful dioramas (displays), were re-located to the Frederick County Fire/Rescue Museum and the National Fire Heritage Center in Emmitsburg.

Transported by Frank Underwood, Deputy Chief of the Volunteer Emergency Services Command of the Prince Georges County, MD, Fire and EMS Department, also Past President of the Maryland State Firemen’s Association (MSFA) and long-time Branchville VFD member, the units arrived at their new home on Friday, June 7, 2013. They were almost lost to the junk pile as their former home was about to undergo extensive renovation.....a horrible thought for all who had worked hard to see the original Firefighters Room created along with numerous historical displays established there over 4 decades ago! Each diorama measures approximately 36” wide, 30” high and 24” deep and together are now a feature attraction just inside the main entrance area of the Emmitsburg facility.

A number of hours of cleaning, minor restoration and preparation measures were required. (work lasted from early morning until after midnight and then again the next day). The photo here helps tell part of the story. Those dioramas were the talk of all those originally associated with establishment of the room which required dozens of meetings and hundreds of hours to design, develop and construct. It was supported by all major fire departments and fire organizations in the State at the time. Fortunately, other valuable installation of new small electric motors to be accomplished shortly.

Additional MSFA historical artifacts are likewise to be a part of the Museum collection in the near future, too. The MSFA plays many major roles but is likely known best beyond the State’s boarders for the significant role it plays in support of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial and Foundation (NFFF) located within walking distance of the Museum and Heritage Center.

NFFF and MSFA continue their close working relationship which began prior to the Memorial’s construction back in 1981.

Then, a month later, on Saturday July 6, Past President Underwood, along with wife, Renee again made a voyage to Emmitsburg to deliver 5 most attractive Maryland White Oak wood and glass display cases that likewise had initially been destined for the dumpster. Maryland White Oak being the State Tree of the Old Line State.

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New Smoke Alarm Law Explained

By Bruce D. Bouch
Dir. of Public Education & Media Affairs, Office of the State Fire Marshal

The Maryland Smoke Alarm Technology Task Force spent nearly two years reviewing evolving smoke alarm technologies and speaking with experts and manufacturers from around the country. Everyone is encouraged to read the Smoke Alarm Technology Task Force Report dated August 2012. The report is available on the MD State Fire Marshal’s Office website: www.mdsp.org/firemarshal. Click on document downloads and then open the task force report.

While strict compliance with the provisions of the new Maryland Smoke Alarm Law will significantly reduce the unnecessary loss of life in residential fires, most code officials have no jurisdiction in existing one- and two-family dwellings. It will therefore be critical to create widespread publicity to convince the public of the critical need to upgrade the smoke alarm coverage in their homes. Please take every opportunity to encourage compliance with the new Maryland Smoke Alarm Law.

A summary of the more important provisions of the new smoke alarm legislation are as follows:

1. The new Maryland Smoke Alarm Law is part of the Public Safety Article, Sections 9-101 through 9-109. At present, the best way to review the wording is to go to the Maryland General Assembly website and bring up the final version of Senate Bill 969 or House Bill 1413. When doing this, please keep in mind that the first six pages of the document are bracketed out old language which has been deleted and that the new law is in bold capital letters beginning in the middle of page six. Everyone is encouraged to read through the new law.
2. The new Maryland Smoke Alarm Law will require the replacement of smoke alarms when they are ten years old; (ten years from the date of manufacture). This replacement requirement is already in the adopted State Fire Code, reference to the 2010 edition of NFPA 72, Paragraph 14.4.8. It is envisioned that adding the wording in State Law and publicizing the requirement will hopefully result in the widespread replacement of older nonfunctioning or unreliable smoke alarms. The date of manufacture, while sometimes hard to locate, should be printed on the back of the smoke alarm. If no manufacture date can be located, it is clearly time to replace the smoke alarm.
3. For new construction, the Maryland Smoke Alarm Law has simply been updated to correspond with the International Residential Code and NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code. An AC power, battery back-up smoke alarm is required in every bedroom, in the common area outside of the bedrooms and on every other level of the dwelling unit, with all of the required smoke alarms being interconnected. Every local building official who is presently enforcing the 2009 or 2012 IRC should already be enforcing this requirement and there is essentially no change in requirements or increase in cost.
4. The smoke alarm requirements for existing older homes are based upon when the house was built. As a result, the requirements are sometimes confusing and it will be critical to determine when the home was actually built to determine the level and type of smoke alarms required. Key dates being: July 1, 1975, January 1, 1989, and January 1, 1990.
5. The new law heavily emphasizes the use of sealed smoke alarms with long life batteries and silence/hush buttons. However, it is critical to understand that these devices are appropriate only where battery operated smoke alarms presently exist or in locations where no smoke alarms are present. It is never acceptable to remove required wired in smoke alarms and replace them with any type of battery only operated device.
6. The intent of the new Maryland Smoke Alarm Law was to achieve as much reliable smoke alarm coverage as possible in older dwellings without ever requiring a homeowner to run new wiring.
7. The primary intent of the new Maryland Smoke Alarm Law was to transition away from smoke alarms with nine-volt batteries. Historically, the normal course of action when frying bacon or burning toast activated the smoke alarm was to stand on a chair and remove the battery to quiet the alarm. The annoying low battery alarm chirp which nearly always occurs at 3:00 in the morning has once more resulted in removal of the smoke alarm battery. Despite the best of intentions, many of these batteries never get replaced resulting in much loss of life fires in homes having smoke alarms with dead or missing batteries. Both of these problems will be essentially solved as we transition to sealed smoke alarms. The silence button will temporarily turn off the alarm due to cooking activations and the alarm will reset after a few minutes. A low battery chirp will occur only once every ten years with the new generation sealed units, rather than once per year. This then indicates it is time to replace the entire smoke alarm.
8. While the new sealed smoke alarms with long life batteries and hush features will cost a few more dollars at the time of purchase,
Frederick County Changes

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The “Delegation of Authority” ordinance provides for a formal process to assure involvement and input for all facets of the fire service, as well as the general public.

The first “fire board” has been appointed with five volunteer battalion representatives, two public representatives and two career representatives providing “advice and cooperation” to the new director.

A new era of consolidation and cooperation has been opened for the Frederick County fire and rescue service. The transition to a consolidated fire and rescue service will provide new opportunities and challenges. We welcome Chief Pouget, Deputy Chief Keyser and Deputy Chief Grierson to Frederick County and look forward to the new era of fire service leadership.

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Smoke Detectors

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money is actually saved over the ten year life of the device since there is no longer a need to purchase new nine-volt batteries every year.

9. Under the old law, for homes constructed prior to July 1, 1975, a smoke alarm was required in each sleeping area and the smoke alarm may be battery operated. Essentially, an older two story house with a basement could get by with a single nine-volt battery operated smoke alarm in the second floor hallway, outside of the bedrooms. This device, even if working properly, most likely will not alert a family member who falls asleep playing video games in the basement recreation room or while watching TV in the living room on the first floor.

Goodwill Fire Company

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school year in addition to National Fire Prevention Week in October.

It has been reported recently that many small fire companies are having trouble keeping and recruiting new members. Goodwill has been fortunate in recent months by adding a number of young people as members, all of whom must take a certified training course given by the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute.

The 2013 officers are: Cliff Green, president; Lesteer Downes, III, Vice-President; Donald Dawkins, Treasurer; Ralph Starkey, Assistant Treasurer; Donald Smith, Ambulance Captain; T. J. Palmary, Chief; Raymond Aaron, secretary; Tony Mansfield, Jeff Kiel, David Baker, Ed Burton, Butch Kaufman, Board of Directors.

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10. For homes constructed between July 1, 1975 and June 30, 1990, an AC power operated smoke alarm was required in each sleeping area. Once more, if all of the bedrooms were located on the second floor, only one smoke alarm outside of the sleeping rooms was required. The requirement that the AC-power operated smoke alarms have battery backup became effective July 1, 1990.

11. Any new home in Maryland constructed after January 1, 1989 required at least one hardwired electric smoke alarm on every level of the home, including the basement and required the units to be interconnected in order that activation of any one of the required smoke alarms resulted in the sounding all of the required smoke alarms.

12. Smoke alarm coverage in older homes constructed prior to January 1, 1989, must be upgraded to at least one approved smoke alarm on every level of the older home when any one of the following first occur:

A. The existing smoke alarm is more than ten years old.

B. The existing smoke alarm fails to respond or otherwise malfunctions.

C. There is a change of tenant.

13. To achieve the upgraded smoke alarm coverage noted previously, smoke alarms shall be AC-power operated units except that sealed battery operated smoke alarms with long life batteries and silence / hush button features may be installed in locations of the home where wired in smoke alarms did not previously exist.

Please feel free to contact me as questions arise. The goal of the new law is clearly to get at least one smoke alarm on every level of older homes and transition away from the removable nine-volt battery operated smoke alarms. Please also understand that there is a small, but extremely vocal group of individuals out there that are attempting to convince everyone who will listen that ionization smoke alarms are no good and that only photoelectric smoke alarms should be allowed. The conclusion of the Maryland Smoke Alarm Technology Task Force was that both ionization and photoelectric smoke alarms are listed to Underwriters Laboratories Standard 217 and are perfectly acceptable early warning devices which have been responsible for the saving of many lives.

The members of the Task Force and the Maryland State Fire Marshal’s Office encourage the use of both technologies by installing at least one ionization and at least one photoelectric smoke alarm in every home. Furthermore, nothing in the new law is intended to imply in any way that smoke alarms are an adequate substitute for residential fire sprinkler protection. The combination of properly located and functioning smoke alarms and properly designed residential fire sprinkler protection provide the greatest potential for surviving any residential fire.
Christmas Day of 1949 was a day locked in history for the small town of Hyndman, PA. This small Pennsylvania town was the victim of a deadly conflagration that destroyed much of the town’s business district on the evening of Christmas Day. “A Christmas Story to Remember” tells the story of this historic blaze and the heroes that responded to halt the rapidly spreading blaze.

The book is the product of research conducted by Dick DeVore. DeVore, a 29 year veteran of the Maryland volunteer fire service, served as chief of the Ellerslie Fire Volunteer Fire Company along the Mason Dixon Line in Allegany County. DeVore’s home company as well as many Maryland companies responded that night to assist the Pennsylvania town. “The story is amazing. The fire claimed the lives of two residents, however, the fire service and the community joined forces to help this community rebuild” said DeVore.

DeVore, has donated the proceeds of the sale of this book to the Allegany and Garrett County Volunteer Fire Association. The book funds have been earmarked to the Fire Prevention Scholarship Fund. Currently the book is available on Amazon.com. It can be located by searching “dick devore”. DeVore has indicated that additional titles highlighting the fire service are forthcoming.

Dioramas Saved

"Just like the dioramas, these lighted display cases are just beautiful," remarked Museum President Chip Jewell. Measuring 7’ high and running a total of 23’ long the units make a great addition to the ever-growing displays being featured in both the Museum and National Fire Heritage Center which are co-located together.
A Snowy Day at Hacks Point Fire Company

On a Friday afternoon in late January 2013, snow begins to blanket the Hacks Point Fire Station. Photo: Mike Dixon

Chip’s Logbook

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voter registration drives in some of our county fire stations. We attended company meetings with voter lists in hand, knowing over half of those attending the meeting were not registered. On rare occasion, we did register one or two new voters. Obviously, those running for office also mine the data of the voter list. They know where the votes are located, and where paper tigers lie.

Just ask former Delegate Paul Stull how important one vote can be. He is an active volunteer in Frederick County and was a champion of the fire service in Annapolis. Cooperative efforts between all fire service organizations have proven time and time again that a united front and consistent message benefits all segments of the fire and rescue service of our state. When the late Chief John Fraser of the Baltimore City Fire Department saw the need to pull all fire service organizations together once a week, he saw the strength in numbers that can meet our collective goals.

There will always be issues that differ between career and volunteer, cities and counties, rural and metropolitan, even between counties of our state association. But the more we work together, the more likely we will be successful.

To the MSFA Legislative Committee, job well done! As the late Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago would profess, vote early and often.

Editor’s Note

Welcome to the August edition of the Volunteer Trumpet, the newsletter of the MSFA. As committee members start working on the next issue please let us know if you have any ideas for strengthening the product, suggestions for coverage, or content we should publish.

We are pleased to hear from you as our goal is to publish interesting and informative content for volunteer fire, rescue and EMS personnel of Maryland.

With the start a new volume, we are pleased to welcome Dan Tabler, Past President of the Goodwill Fire Company, to our pages. Dan has provided an update on the oldest company in Queen Anne’s County, Centreville. We look forward to continuing pieces by the retired newspaper editor, as he covers his beat, Queen Anne’s County and nearby areas on the Upper Shore, for the Volunteer Trumpet.

Remember we are always looking for additional contributors (writers & photographers) so if you are interested, please contact us. And be sure to send your company & MSFA material, including photos, to the editor at trumpet@msfa.org

Mike Dixon, Editor
Remembering 50th Anniversary of Maryland’s Worst Plane Crash

by Mike Dixon, Volunteer Trumpet Editor

Many people in Elkton sighed with relief as 1963, an eventful year full of ups and downs, came to an end. As people reflected on those events of fifty years ago, they recalled the opening of I-95, President John F. Kennedy’s visit to dedicate the expressway, and the unbelievable news days later that an assassin’s bullet had struck down the youthful president. So as the country grieved and the calendar turned on that troubling November they surely thought it couldn’t get any worse.

They were wrong for on a terrible December night Pan-American World Airways Flight 214 exploded, plunging into a field at the edge of Elkton. On that cold, rainy Sunday, as lightning periodically illuminated the cornfield eighty-one people perished when the big plane broke apart in flight and debris rained down on mostly open land. Hours later, as rescuers started the grim task of combing the wreckage, a North East Volunteer Fire Company ambulance attendant, Steward W. Godwin, suddenly collapsed and died.

This horrifying air disaster, the worst in Maryland history, is something that is seared into the collective memory of Cecil County’s emergency responders, the community, and friends and relatives of victims. People involved in the tragedy will never forget the unusual December thunderstorm and how the fiery blast in the stormy sky suddenly illuminated Elkton, momentarily turning December darkness into daylight. Fear, anxiety, and concern swept across the unnerved community as sirens filled the night air with emergency units rushing toward the scene to aid the victims. It was soon obvious to first responders that the accident wasn’t survivable.

On Dec. 8th, 2013, the Singerly Fire Company and The Historical Society of Cecil County will honor the memory of those who lost their lives. On this date, fifty years after the tragedy, families, emergency responders and the public are invited to gather and remember the victims and those who answered the call to help. A complete schedule of events will be released as the date nears.

In preparation for the ceremony volunteers have been busy building a remembrance archive, which includes interviewing first responders such as Thomas N. McIntire, Jr. The Elkton assistant fire chief and police chief vividly recalled answering the alarm, as he drove the first Singerly engine out toward the state line. Riding in the command seat Chief Spec Slaughter had his hands full directing the mobilization of the massive, county-wide emergency response that included units from Delaware and Pennsylvania. Lt. Don Hash (MSP retired), the first police officer to arrive on the scene, was also interviewed.

The Rev. Hubert Jicha and retired school superintendent Henry Shaffer will facilitate the program. Henry, a 16-year-old rookie firefighter at the time of the crash, was one of the first responders. The afternoon will include the sharing of memories, outtakes from the oral history collection and displays of material from the Historical Society. Those resources include newspapers, photographs, a police blotter, the emergency radio communication tape, and television news broadcasts.

In the audience there will be emergency responders who answered the unnerving call, people from the community and family members. So part of the observance includes the “Flight 214 Listening Station.” Anyone affected by the tragedy — family members, firefighters, police officers, EMS professionals, -- will be invited to privately share their stories about the tragedy. Oral historians will be on duty, listening to people, asking a few questions, and recording the conversation. The conservations — whatever people want to share -- will be added to the Flight 214 Remembrance archives.
Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department honors Arizona Firefighters. See article on page 2